THE ADDRESS

OF

THE HON. JOHN THORN.

SCENE.—A study, book cases round the room, tin deed boxes on tops of bookcases on one of which are painted the words "The Splashville Ocean Steamship Co." on another the "B. Seigniory" table, chairs, &c.

John Thorn seated near table, pens, ink and paper within reach, reclining in arm chair with fore-finger of right hand laid on the side of his nose, *loquitur*.

My position is excessively embarrassing, I must admit that I am puzzled. I really don't know what to do. I had hoped at one time that this perpetual struggle to please all parties was drawing to a close, and that as Governor of Owhyhee or Otaheite I should find the repose so congenial to any taste and talents, but that cup was dashed from my lips and I was forced to solace myself with the idea that as one of the Chief Justices of Skitzland I should enjoy the *otium cum dignitate* so sweet to all worn out politicians, but that vision passed away also and I am now frightfully bothered with the realities of my position. One party pulls me one way, the other the other. A manufacturing friend inveighs against Free Trade as destructive to the native industry of the Province. A Free Trade supporter pours into my ears a diatribe against protection as ruinous to the commerce of the country. To be, or, not to be, is a question of quite as much importance to me as ever it was to Hamlet. What shall I be? a Free Trader or a Protectionist, which shall I take to my bosom? Oh how happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away. Hitherto I have managed pretty well. I've always gone with the current trusting to the eddy to bring me up. With the manufacturers I am in the habit of deploring the non-encouragement of native industry, with the Free

Traders I sigh over our fettered commerce. My sympathy is so easily excited and I chime in so readily with the humor of my companion for the moment that I secure hosts of friends, but it is living over a mine and playing with matches, for should I by some mistake open the Protection side of my heart to some sturdy Free Trader or its Free Trade half to some rabid Protectionist I should forfeit my position and lose my seat. If I could but find out which is the stronger party my policy would immediately become decided and I would leave the weaker in the lurch, but only fancy how disgusting, should I mistake the weaker for the stronger faction. I might be either without shocking my principles, why then couldn't I be both, and be all things to all men. But no I'll be neither. I'll be strictly neutral. I'll temporize, —I'll come the Louis Napoleon over them. I'll cultivate impenetrability of feature, and on all occasions, I'll declare that the defence of the Province should engross the entire attention of its public men, and that only by the volunteers can the hearths and homes of Skitzland be defended from the attacks of the restless Celt.—But to my task.

(Draws his chair to the table, seizes a pen, dips it in the ink, arranges a half quire of paper before him and writes)—

Fellow countrymen (wouldn't patres conscripti do better?—no—I think not) I come before you again to solicit your suffrages. Confident that my conduct in the past affords the best guarantee for my behavior in the future, I need refer, but to a few of the oases which mark the desert of my political career to demonstrate that no one in Skitland is better qualified, either by nature or art, than I, to represent in Parliament the magnificent, illustrious, and ever progressing city of Splashville.

Fellow citizens, (*aside*, that will take with the Americans, it breathes a spirit of equality, and smacks moreover of that youthful indiscretion of mine, the annexation manifesto), you all know that to the utmost of my ability I have on every occasion aided and assisted my constituents to advance their own interests even at the expense of the Province. I refer you to the owners of the Splashville line of Ocean Steamships for further informateon on that subject. My financial ability is proved by the facility with which I as Com. of Public Works disbursed the money of the Province in finishing the Parliament buildings at Ottawa. I may say with perfect justice of that splendid specimen of

Provi. cial openhandedness and magnanimity "quorum pars magna fin." (*Aside*, a little Latin goes down admirably with a mercantile audience,no one understands it,but every fellow interprets it exactly to suit the current of his own ideas). My martial ability is demonstrated in my speeches on the Volunteer system, and my patriotism was shown during an extended term of service with my regiment on the Frontier during the recent Fenian invasion. In the arts of peace I have shone preeminent, my hospitality has been unbounded, never for the last eight years has a stranger superior in rank to an esquire and with an income exceeding £1000 a year visited Splashville without gracing my portals with his presence. In your name and as your representative have I welcomed them, as your deputy have I feted them, no sordid self interest no paltry vanity prompted my actions, I believed that it was my duty so to do and I acted up to my belief.

It may so happen that many who in my obscurer days were frequently my guests have observed that of late years they have not had the same opportunities as of old of becoming acquainted with the merits of my *chef de cuisine* and the flavor of my claret *Tempora mutantur*, my dear friends *et nos mutamur in illis*. There is a vast difference between plain John Thorn, the youthful Scotch barrister and the Hon. John Thorn, Ex-Solicitor General, Prov. Secretary, Com. of Public Works, expectant Colonial Governor and Chief Justice, the friend of noble Dukes, the confidant of Royal Princes. Station has its duties or as our French brethren elegantly express it *noblesse s'oblige*. Surely you cannot object to any conforming to the usages of the society into which you have elevated me. I am not to blame therefore for not asking my old friend client and supporter B. to meet my new friend Lord A. at dinner for though B. is a most estimable member of society, a good friend, an honest man, and a sincere Christian, the lustre of his virtues is dimmed by the fact that he commenced life agriculturally and a few of the charming simplicities of rustic existence might possibly make their appearance at table. None of you can blame me for this delicacy of sentiment, I feel immensely the loss which I sustain by depriving myself of the advantage of B's presence,but alas! society has its laws which no one can infringe with impunity. I know that I am addressing sensible men who will make allowances for the change in my circumstances and who will extend

their compassion to one who for many years past has been forced by their choice of him as their representative to do violence to the best feelings of his nature and to hide beneath the joyous mask of a smiling face the anguish of a breaking heart.

If amongst you there can be found one man competent to represent Splashville Centre, fit to stand in my shoes, I will retire into private life, there to recruit my health shattered in your service, there to build up my practice ruined by my election, and there to regain a portion of that sweet innocence which was the most engaging feature about me ere in accordance with your wishes I endured the blighting baptism of political life.

(*Aside.*—Now I have arrived at the difficult stage, of course it will be expected that I should give an idea of my future course, that I should declare as they call them my principles ; now I am not an unprincipled fellow, but I really have no principles at all. I have been almost everything in my time, loyalist, annexationist, confederationist, protectionist and free trader, and I feel within me a capacity for being half a dozen things more, but with my constitution it really is an *embarras de richesse*, but why should I pin my faith on the skirt of any principle when all principles are alike to me.

Gorilla is the only man of our party who has principles and devilish unpleasant ones they are too. I spoke to him civilly about that collectorship, and he told me to go to the devil and mind my own business, of course as he is the leader of our party I pocketed the affront, but I put it to any sensible man if that's the way the member for Splashville Centre, the most important Anglo Saxon constituency in Skitzland East, should be treated ; I can't afford to quarrel with him either and I verily believe that if he were to turn round and pull the noses of every Anglo Saxon Blue in the house, we'd submit quietly and look upon it as a little harmless bit of eccentricity on his part. By Jove, he's Lord Paramount here, and there isn't one of us with pluck enough to face the little beggar ; but *revenons a nos moutons*,—sits down and and commences to write again.)

My principles gentlemen, are the same as those which animate the majority of the electors of this splendid constituency (*aside*, can the majority find fault with that declaration, as for the minority what care I for them.) Do you doubt, examine into the strength of your respec-

tive parties, whichever is the more powerful be it Protectionist or Free Trade, to that party I can assure you I with my whole soul and strength belong. you will pardon me for n t being more explicit, but I am desirous that the party to which from my youth up I have adhered should immediately take measures to know its own strength as well as the weakness of its adversary. Once more, then, my friends once more into the breach, or fill the ditch up with our Splashville dead. Remember that in electing me you have a man in *utrumque paratus* (*aside*, that is ready to take anything he can get) who has always maintained the honor of his constituency, has worked for the interests of his constituents and who has to give the truest idea of his versatility of intellect and immutability of character, spoken for three hours wisely and well in favor of Protection and ended by voting dead against it.

I am, &c.,

JOHN THORN.